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Stunning final year work ‘revealed’ by creative students

Architecture, art, design and media students have unveiled their innovative work at this year’s REVEAL, a spectacular two-week exhibition across Northumbria’s campus.

REVEAL saw industry partners, media, and members of the public join the University’s award-winning students and their friends and family, to celebrate the creative talent of the future and meet the expert academics who have taught them over the last few years.

The high-profile audience at the launch night included industry elite and key business partners, as well as special guests The Unthanks. The North East folk band opened the Fine Art show by performing a tribute to their father George Unthank, who graduates from Northumbria this summer.

The North East born Mercury Music Nominees Rachel and Becky Unthank were delighted to attend REVEAL before heading off to play Glastonbury's main stage next week.

Rachel said: "We're proud to be here to support our Dad. We grew up in the North East and it has been a big influence on us. It's a vibrant, interesting and diverse region which has fed into our creative work. Wherever you are your landscape feeds into creative practise, some of you will have travelled here and made it your home for three years, in some ways that will have fed into your stories – we're looking forward to seeing that tonight.

"Coming to a place like this which is a safe haven for you to experiment and find your own voice is so valuable, I hope you've enjoyed that experience. We should treasure these places."

George's artwork, like many other creations on show in REVEAL, draws inspiration from the culture and history of the North East.

Other links with the North East music scene at REVEAL were in Northumbria's architecture department where artistic designs by Lithuanian student Gintare Kapociute attracted Sunderland band Lilliput's attention, who now want Gintare to design their new album cover.

Kelly Mackinnon, Senior Lecturer and Director of Outreach and Widening Participation in Architecture at Northumbria said: "We're really proud of the students and delighted that such a wide range of visitors have shown an interest in the show. There were creatives from all walks of life and all ages on the opening night.

"Employers always comment on our student's ability to communicate both their narrative and design well. Live briefs are worked upon which the students then go onto develop providing an authentic learning environment. This year shows a variety in media from Undergraduate through to Masters."

The University's architecture courses, which are part of the Engineering and Environment Faculty at Northumbria were recently described as 'exceptional' by visiting external examiners.

While some students met head hunters looking to offer them their first graduate job, mature students embarking on a career change were applauded by guests.

Exhibiting Interior Architecture student Vicky Stuart said: "I swapped my NHS job for a BA (Hons) Interior Architecture degree at Northumbria three years ago. I wanted to do something creative, and when I was interviewed by the Interior Architecture staff at Northumbria I knew this was for me. They explained I could excel despite coming from a different industry and have continued to inspire and encourage me throughout my degree. The exhibition is a wonderful celebration of all the hard work we students and staff have put in – I'm looking forward to exhibiting at Free Range in London."

Many of Northumbria's art and design students take their work to exhibit in London at a variety of prestigious shows over the summer, including D&AD New Blood, Free Range Interiors and New Designers. Hundreds of Northumbria's fashion students exhibited at Graduate Fashion Week in May with nine shortlisted for national awards and one selected out of 400 to feature alongside 23 others in a Best in Show Catwalk.

Dr Heather Robson, Associate Dean, Business and Engagement for Arts, Design and Social Sciences at Northumbria University, said: "Last year, we received more than one hundred international and national awards for our arts, design and architecture programmes and we've already picked up a large collection ahead of our degree show this year including two awards from RSA Student Design Awards in the Design for Industry course which Sir Jonathan Ives is an alumni of, and four awards in Graphic Design so far. The awards ceremony for the distinguished architecture department is still to come.

"This is also the first year we have final year Master of Fine Art students exhibiting. The seven pioneering artists opened their show 'MilKilling' at BALTIC 39 on Monday after two years on the new BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art and Northumbria University Master of Fine Arts degree (BxNU MFA).

"We are proud to showcase our students' talent to the world. REVEAL gives

them the chance to raise their profile and opens doors to career opportunities, so anyone who wants a sneak preview of new artwork and cutting-edge design before it hits the stage, screen and shelves, should come along.”

The Reveal show is open for public admission every weekday between 19-27 June at a range of venues across the University’s City campus. It brings together the architecture, arts, design and media graduating students of 2015. For further information visit: <https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/about-us/news-events/events/2015/06/reveal-2015/>

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